



Sussex County 2012-2018 Capital Transportation Program Request

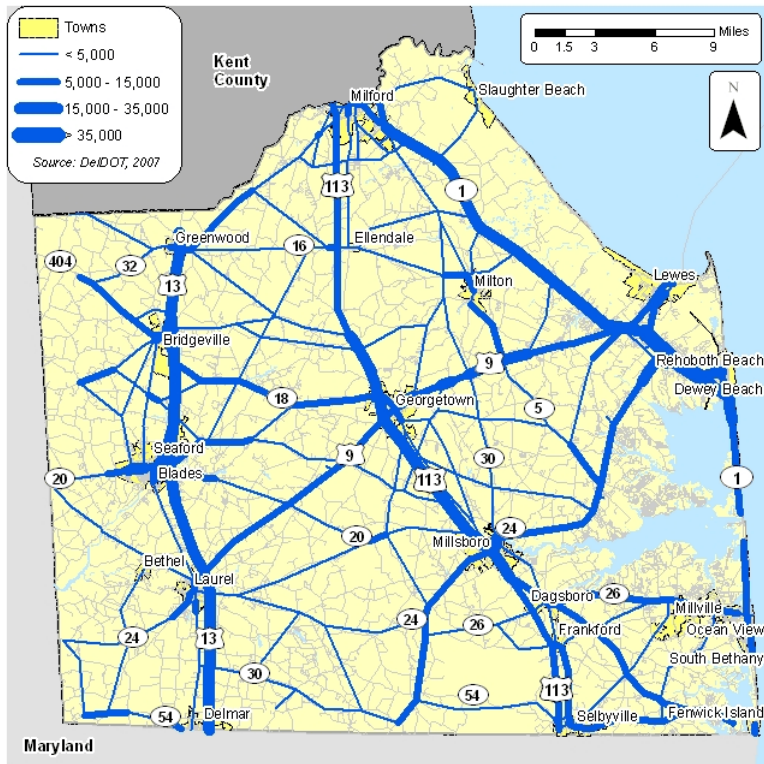


September 15, 2011

Sussex County

2012-2018 Capital Transportation Program Request

Average Annual Daily Traffic - 2005



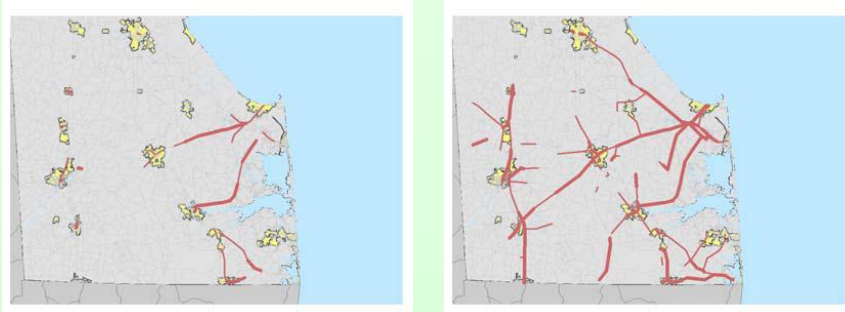
Source: Sussex County 2007 Comprehensive Plan Update

Sussex County is Delaware's largest county, with 938 square miles of land within its borders. Within that broad expanse is more than 37 percent of the State's 6,281 miles of public roadway.

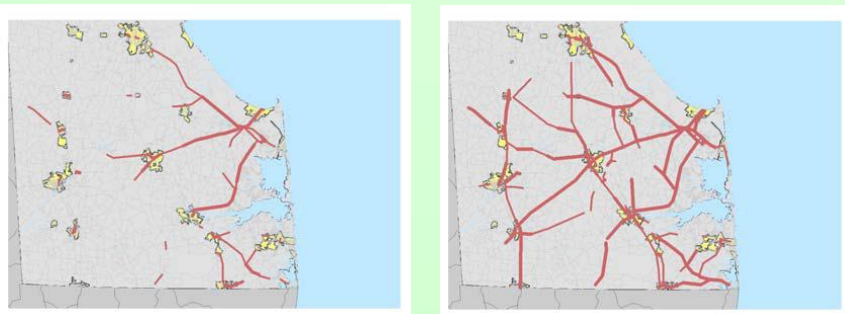
In Sussex County, the most heavily traveled roadways are US 13 and SR 1 (each carrying more than 30,000 vehicles daily), followed by US 113 with more than 24,000 vehicles daily. At the same time, the major east-west routes also are heavily traveled, though these are less capable of extensive traffic. Congestion due to the movement of summer visitors often compounds traffic problems.

As noted in the charts below, congestion is expected to worsen by 2030, even assuming currently planned projects are completed.

2000 and 2030 Year-Round Congestion (Volume to Capacity Ratio > 85%)



2000 and 2030 Summer Congestion (Volume to Capacity Ratio > 85%)



Source: Sussex County 2007 Comprehensive Plan Update

Sussex County Priorities

2012-2018 Capital Transportation Program Request



The following items are Sussex County's transportation priorities for the 2012-2018 Capital Transportation Program. Each priority is explained in further detail in subsequent sections of this request:

- East-West Improvements
 - ❖ SR 24
 - ❖ SR 26
 - ❖ SR 54
 - ❖ Routes 404/9
- North-South Highway Improvements
- SR 1 Improvements
- Evacuation Routes
- Flooding Issues
- Sussex County Airport
- Local Roads
- Park Avenue/US 9 Truck Route
- Intersections, Signage & Signalization
- Bicycling/Walking Trails
- Alternative Transportation

East–West Corridors

2012-2018 Capital Transportation Program Request

The Capital Transportation Program budget in FY12 includes more than \$30 million in State and federal funding for a number of improvements to portions of the county's network of east-west arteries. Projects targeted for funding include mainline improvements now occurring on SR 54, preliminary engineering work on SR 24, and the completion of detour routes for the SR 26 mainline improvement project in 2012.

Sussex County appreciates the State's attention to these very critical links to the transportation system by budgeting for these current and future long-term projects.

However, substantially more funding will be needed in the years ahead, particularly for rights of way acquisitions, so improvements on other major east-west arteries can occur across the entire network. These improvements would include:

- Widening corridors to accommodate increased traffic volume;
- Resurfacing of shoulders to highway standards;
- Intersection upgrades such as the addition of left-turn lanes, increased illumination, and directional signage;
- Better coordination of traffic signals at identified choke points.

If current travel patterns continue as predicted, increased and frequent congestion will further interfere with local residents' mobility in many areas. Anticipating and funding necessary improvements such as these across the county's entire network of east-west arteries will better meet the travel needs of local residents and visitors for decades to come.

East–West Corridors

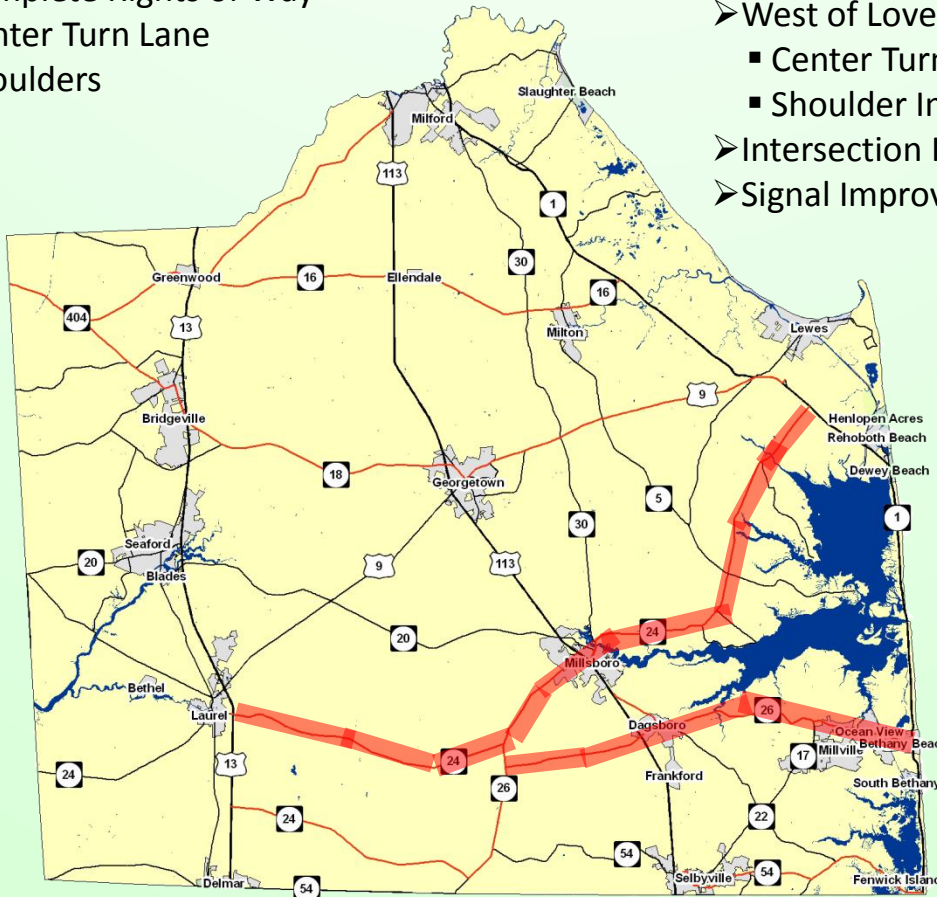
2012-2018 Capital Transportation Program Request

SR 26 Improvements

- Complete Detour Routes
(*underway*)
 - Burbage Road
 - Windmill Road
 - Central Avenue
 - Beaver Dam Road
- Complete Rights of Way
- Center Turn Lane
- Shoulders

SR 24 Improvements

- Acquire Rights of Way
- East from Love Creek to SR 1
 - Widen to 4 Lanes (with consideration toward extending lanes to Long Neck Road)
 - Shoulder Improvements
 - Turn lanes
- West of Love Creek to US 113
 - Center Turn Lane
 - Shoulder Improvements
- Intersection Improvements
- Signal Improvements



East–West Corridors

2012-2018 Capital Transportation Program Request

SR 404/US 9 Improvements

- Increase Capacity for SR 404 from Maryland east to Georgetown
- Increase Capacity for US 9 from Georgetown east to SR 1
 - Conduct comprehensive corridor review to identify and prioritize key intersections for improvement

SR 54 Improvements

- Keenwick West to SR 20 (*underway*)
 - Center Turn Lane
 - Shoulders
 - Sidewalks
- Begin Similar Improvements West to Selbyville

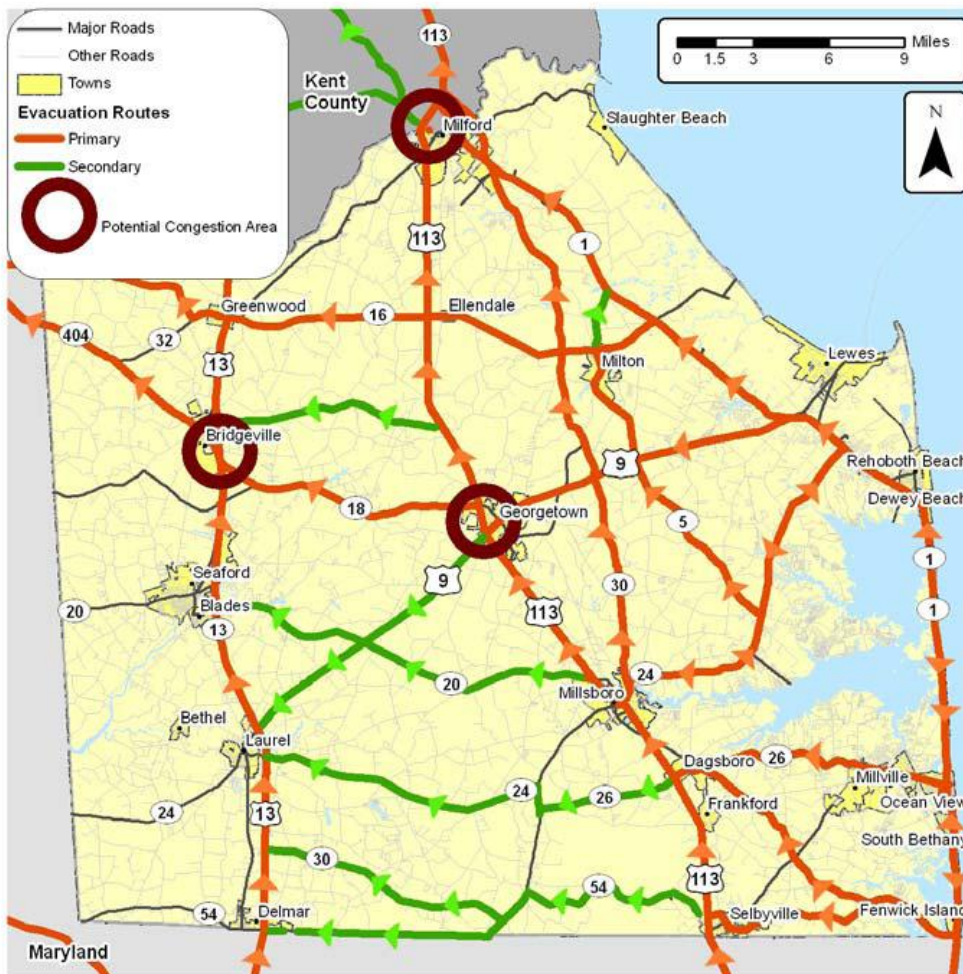


Evacuation Routes

2012-2018 Capital Transportation Program Request

In an emergency, moving the public out of harm's way in a timely, orderly fashion is critical to preventing loss of life. This was demonstrated recently in the evacuation that preceded Hurricane Irene. The map reflects evacuation routes to be used in the event of a major storm or other disaster. It is important that efforts be made to:

- Upgrade evacuation routes to accommodate traffic and improve flow (e.g. installing turn lanes at intersections where dedicated lanes are absent);
- Continue the conversion of additional traffic signals along evacuation routes to a computerized system to speed up evacuation process;
- Further educate the public of these routes. This can be accomplished via Web sites (State, County, and Town), local media (TV and radio), signs, variable message boards, etc.



Source: Sussex County 2007 Comprehensive Plan Update



Sussex County Airport

2012-2018 Capital Transportation Program Request



The Sussex County Airport near Georgetown is a critical link in Southern Delaware's transportation system, and the facility is equally vital to the local economy.

The airport records approximately 40,000 landings and takeoffs each year, and is home to a vibrant economic and educational base, including PATS Aircraft and its auxiliary fuel tank installation business and the DelTech airframe maintenance training program.

Currently, there are 16 employers and more than 900 jobs at the Sussex County Industrial Airpark, with an annual payroll of more than \$36 million. Planned improvements, notably the extension of the main runway from 5,000 feet to 6,000 feet, will help retain well-paying jobs and attract new opportunities to the Sussex County Airport and the greater community.

Sussex County government estimates expenditures of more than \$25 million from FY12 to FY16 for the Sussex County Airport & Industrial Park. The County estimates the local share of costs for the planned 1,000-foot runway extension to be approximately \$12 million. This includes \$6 million for the actual runway extension, and an additional \$6 million for the necessary realignment of Park Avenue (see Page 8).

The County urges the Council on Transportation, the Department, and the State to continue their work with the County and Delaware's Congressional delegation to secure the necessary federal and state funding for the full 1,000-foot runway extension, which is critical to ensuring aviation safety and continued economic opportunities in Sussex County.

Park Avenue/US 9 Truck Route

2012-2018 Capital Transportation Program Request



As part of the planned main runway extension project at the Sussex County Airport, portions of Park Avenue – also known to travelers as the US 9 Truck Route – on the southeastern side of Georgetown would require relocation. Park Avenue is a local bypass for trucks, designated by the Department of Transportation, and is the sole route to the Sussex County Industrial Airpark. It also serves as a popular local route for motorists as they navigate through the Georgetown area.

As part of the road relocation project, the southern end of Park Avenue would shift from its current terminus at South Bedford Street to approximately one-half mile southward, to the intersection of South Bedford Street and Arrow Safety Road. The relocation is necessary to accommodate the County's goal of extending by 1,000 feet the main runway at the Sussex County Airport, as well as to provide a safer, more efficient route around Georgetown.

This project, estimated at approximately \$6 million, would present an opportunity for other long-needed improvements to be made to Park Avenue, including the addition of shoulders and installation of turn lanes, as well as intersection modifications at Arrow Safety Road and US 113.

Sussex County has invested more than \$3 million to secure properties in this area in recent years to make way for the planned runway extension project and necessary road relocation.

County government requests that the Council on Transportation give thoughtful consideration toward allocating long-term funding for Park Avenue's realignment and other improvements, all of which would enable the runway project to move forward and guarantee a safer route for the traveling public.

Bicycling/Walking Trails

2012-2018 Capital Transportation Program Request

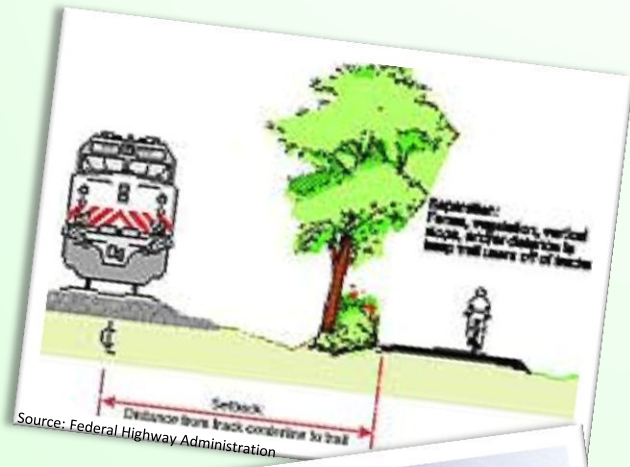
Sussex County supports the recent attention placed on efforts to bring new Rails with Trails pathways to Southern Delaware.

In June 2011, the Delaware General Assembly set aside \$5 million in funding to help create 'state bike routes' linking communities, parks, and other points of interest in the First State. One potential project that could benefit from this funding is the long proposed Georgetown-to-Lewes Rail Trail, which would stretch 17 miles alongside the Delaware Coastline Railroad line from the county seat to the beaches.

This proposed multi-use path would provide an alternate means for residents and visitors alike to navigate Sussex County, to access other trails, such as the Breakwater & Junction Trail between Lewes and Rehoboth Beach, and would promote a healthier lifestyle for users young and old. It could also retain the current rail line, providing a critical link for businesses to move products and keep the local economy strong.

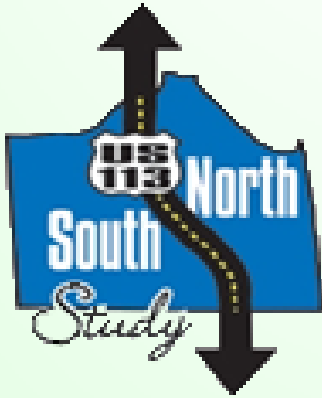
Sussex County requests that the Council on Transportation and the Department evaluate proposals such as the Georgetown-to-Lewes Rail Trail when deciding how to allocate Delaware's annual share of federal matching funds, such as the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) and Surface Transportation Program (STP) grants.

Those dollars, in conjunction with the \$5 million set aside in the 2011 Bond Bill, could make alternative, multi-use paths a reality for bicyclists and pedestrians who want to connect with their communities and the natural beauty that makes Sussex County so special.



North-South Hwy Improvements

2012-2018 Capital Transportation Program Request



Improvements to Sussex County's major north-south corridors, specifically US 113, remain a significant transportation need in order to address local traffic requirements, seasonal demands and interstate travel. Public sentiment to preserve the existing highway with the least amount of impacts on properties has compelled the State to re-evaluate planned upgrades to this corridor.

US 113 is fed by SR 1 from the north, SR 404 from the west and the Maryland portion of US 113 from the south. Many travelers to the coastal areas of Sussex County already utilize US 113 to bypass the often congested SR 1 corridor.

Users have distinct, and in some cases, conflicting operational requirements. Local users prefer access to properties with relatively simple and safe traffic patterns. Trucks, vacationers, and long-distance commuters, on the other hand, desire high-speed traffic patterns with minimal interruptions. Intersection upgrades, additional travel lanes, and other modifications could satisfy travelers' needs, and ease demand on other north-south arteries, such as US 13 and SR 1.

Because of the project's potential costs and effects, the County believes improvements should be phased in, based on public consensus, and given high priority to move the project from concept to reality.



Del. Route 1 Improvements

2012-2018 Capital Transportation Program Request

Improvements along SR 1, especially near the beach area, must continue for the sake of improving safety and aiding in the reduction of traffic congestion.

➤ **Five Points Intersection/US 9 Realignment**

Improvements are needed at the Five Points intersection to reduce accidents at this gateway to the resort area, which is often congested and confusing to motorists. The State's plan to realign the US 9 connection at Five Points could help alleviate congestion and confusion.



SR 1 at Nassau Bridge, Five Points

➤ **Intersections at SR 16 near Milton and SR 30 near Milford**

Overpasses with exits at these intersections would improve safety. These are accident-prone and dangerous intersections. Overpasses also would eliminate the need for traffic signals.



Intersection of SR 16 and SR 1 near Milton

➤ **Wescoats Corner Improvements**

Alleviate confusion that can lead to accidents at this intersection.

➤ **Sidewalks**

Additional sidewalks along SR 1, particularly in gaps that exist between Five Points to Dewey Beach, would improve safety for pedestrians and encourage walking to and from this busy commercial area.



Bicyclist crossing SR 1

➤ **Pedestrian Bridges and Crosswalks**

Pedestrian/bicycle crosswalks at key locations would improve safety. Pedestrian bridges would further improve safety for those walking near the retail outlets by moving them above traffic.

➤ **Pedestrian/Bicycling Paths**

Expanding the popular Rails with Trails concept along railway corridors, particularly between Georgetown and Lewes, could improve alternative movement to and along the SR 1 corridor.



Sidewalk ends along SR 1

➤ **Commercial Properties Interconnectivity**

Connecting entrances/exits between adjoining commercial properties should be a priority, where possible, along the SR 1 corridor. This would allow those visiting stores the ability to move among the properties without having to re-enter and exit the highway. Such connectivity also should be used in commercial areas along the US 13 and US 113 corridors.

Flooding Issues

2012-2018 Capital Transportation Program Request

Extreme weather that has affected Sussex County in recent years has been a test of Sussex County's transportation system, and a reminder of how vulnerable the county's road system can be, particularly during nor'easters and tropical events.

Torrential rains and storm-swollen tides have resulted in many critical roadways being submerged, cutting off access to residents in Sussex County's coastal communities such as Primehook Beach, Long Neck and Oak Orchard. During significant storms, these and other coastal roads have been impassable for hours, even days, hampering not just routine travel, but the movement of emergency response vehicles, as well.

Roads such as Prime Hook Road, Long Neck Road and Fred Hudson Road serve hundreds, if not thousands, of residents and properties. In some instances, these roads are the only primary routes into and out of flood-prone communities.

Sussex County encourages the State to evaluate these and other roads that are known to be flood-prone, and asks the Council on Transportation to give consideration toward funding future elevation and flood mitigation projects, where possible. The SR 54 viaduct project west of Fenwick Island, completed in 2003, illustrates that with proper planning and funding, critical links to the county's transportation system can be improved to ensure access even during extreme weather and flooding events.



New Road, west of Lewes

Fred Hudson Road, north of Bethany Beach

Local Roads

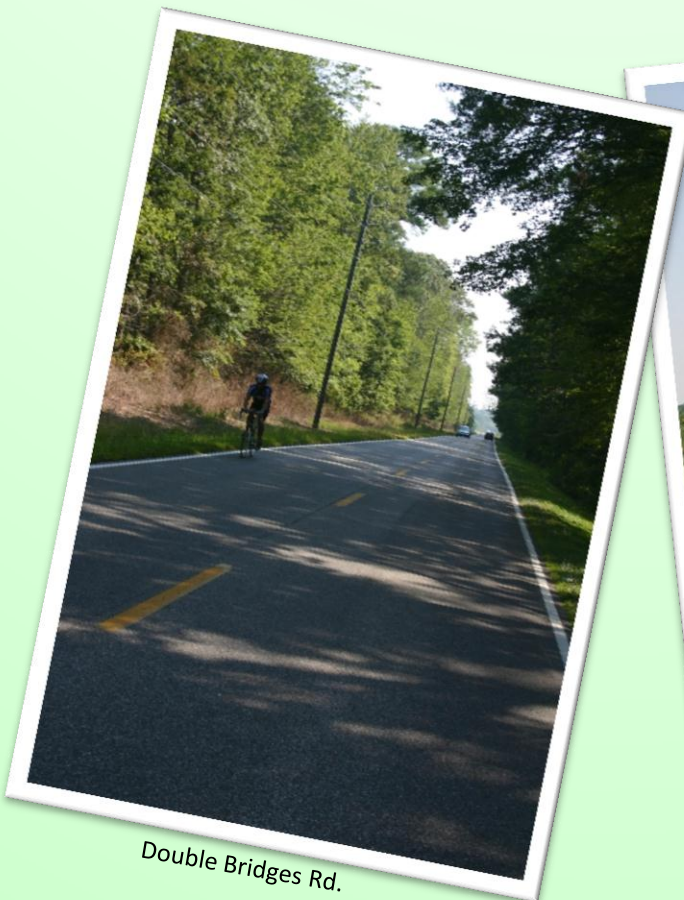
2012-2018 Capital Transportation Program Request

Routes such as SR 1, US 113 and US 13 serve as the major arteries of Sussex County's transportation network. Local roads, however, are the vessels that move traffic throughout all parts of the body.

The Sussex County Council submits the following list of local roads as those that should be targeted for upgrade and expansion. These roads are currently or soon will serve a growing population, which will result in added traffic. Many of these roads, either by State designation or through motorists' preference, are used as alternate routes for major thoroughfares.

Upgrades of these roadways includes paving of the surface, widening shoulders and/or installing turn lanes, as indicated. Upgrades also should include marking bicycle and pedestrian lanes, and illuminating key intersections.

The County recognizes it may be impractical to abandon the use of 'tar and chip' treatments on some roads. The County, however, encourages DelDOT to continue pursuit of its 10-year goal to pave all 'tar and chip' roads with an annual average daily traffic (ADT) count greater than 500 vehicles.



Double Bridges Rd.



'Tar & Chip' roadway west of Georgetown

Local Roads

2012-2018 Capital Transportation Program Request

Bethany Beach

- RD 360 – Fred Hudson Road
(Flooding)
- RD 363 – Double Bridges Road
(Shoulders)

Blades

- RD 490 – River Road
(Shoulders)

Bridgeville

- RD 40 – Redden Road
(Widen shoulders)
- RD 525 – Coverdale Road
(Widen shoulders)
- RD 561 – Wesley Church Road
(Shoulders)
- RD 583 – Adams Road
(Shoulders; Turn lane at RD 585)
- RD 585 – Woodbridge Road
(Widen; Turn lane at sports complex)
- RD 594 – Oak Road
(Pave)

Dagsboro/Frankford

- DE 20 – Railroad crossing on Dagsboro Road
(Improve grade at crossover)
- RD 336 – Piney Neck Road
(Shoulders)
- RD 402A – Fox Run Road
(Pave)
- US 113 – DuPont Boulevard at Cricket Street
(Median crossover for EMS)

Ellendale

- DE 16 – Railroad crossing on Main Street
(Improve grade at crossover)

Georgetown

- DE 30 – Gravel Hill Road
(Realign sharp turn)
- RD 48 – Zoar Road/Hollyville Road
(Shoulders; Intersections at Avalon Road and Hurdle Ditch Road)
- RD 62 – East Trap Pond Road
(Shoulders)



Georgetown (cont.)

- RD 249 – Shingle Point Road
(Left-turn lane from US 9)
- RD 318 – Park Avenue (Truck Route 9)
(Shoulders; Left-turn lane from US 9)
- RD 324 – Railroad crossing on Sussex Pines Road
(Improve grade at crossover)
- RD 527 – Wilson Hill Road
(Pave)
- US 113 – DuPont Boulevard at E. Trap Pond Road
(Median crossover for EMS)
- US 113 – DuPont Boulevard at Speedway Road
(Intersection)

Greenwood

- DE 16 – Railroad crossing on Market Street
(Improve grade at crossover)
- DE 36 – Scotts Store Road
(Widen shoulders)
- RD 594 – Webb Farm Road
(Flooding at sharp turn)

Harbeson

- US 9 – Lewes-Georgetown Highway
(Left-turn lane to Hunter's Mill Estates)

Local Roads

2012-2018 Capital Transportation Program Request

Laurel

- RD 446 – Beaver Dam Branch Road
(Pave & Widen)
- RD 515 – Bacons Road
(Pave; Shoulders)

Lewes

- RD 88 – Cave Neck Road
(Lengthen left-turn lane from SR 1)
- RD 266 – New Road
(Shoulders; Bike path)
- RD 270 – Wolfeneck Road/Munchy Branch Road
(Bike/pedestrian path)
- RD 275 – Plantations Road/Postal Lane
(Intersection signalization)

Millsboro

- DE 5 – Indian Mission Road
(Shoulders)
- RD 82 – Hickory Hill Road
(Pave)
- RD 288A – Dorman Road
(Pave)
- RD 313 – Gull Point Road
(Flooding; Intersection)
- RD 328A – Godwin School Road
(Pave)

Millville/Ocean View

- RD 84 – Central Avenue
(Shoulders)
- RD 349 – Old Mill Road
(Pave; Shoulders)
- RD 350 – Railway Road
(Widen shoulders)

Milton

- DE 30 – Railroad crossing north of Sand Hill Road
(Improve grade at crossover)



Milton (cont.)

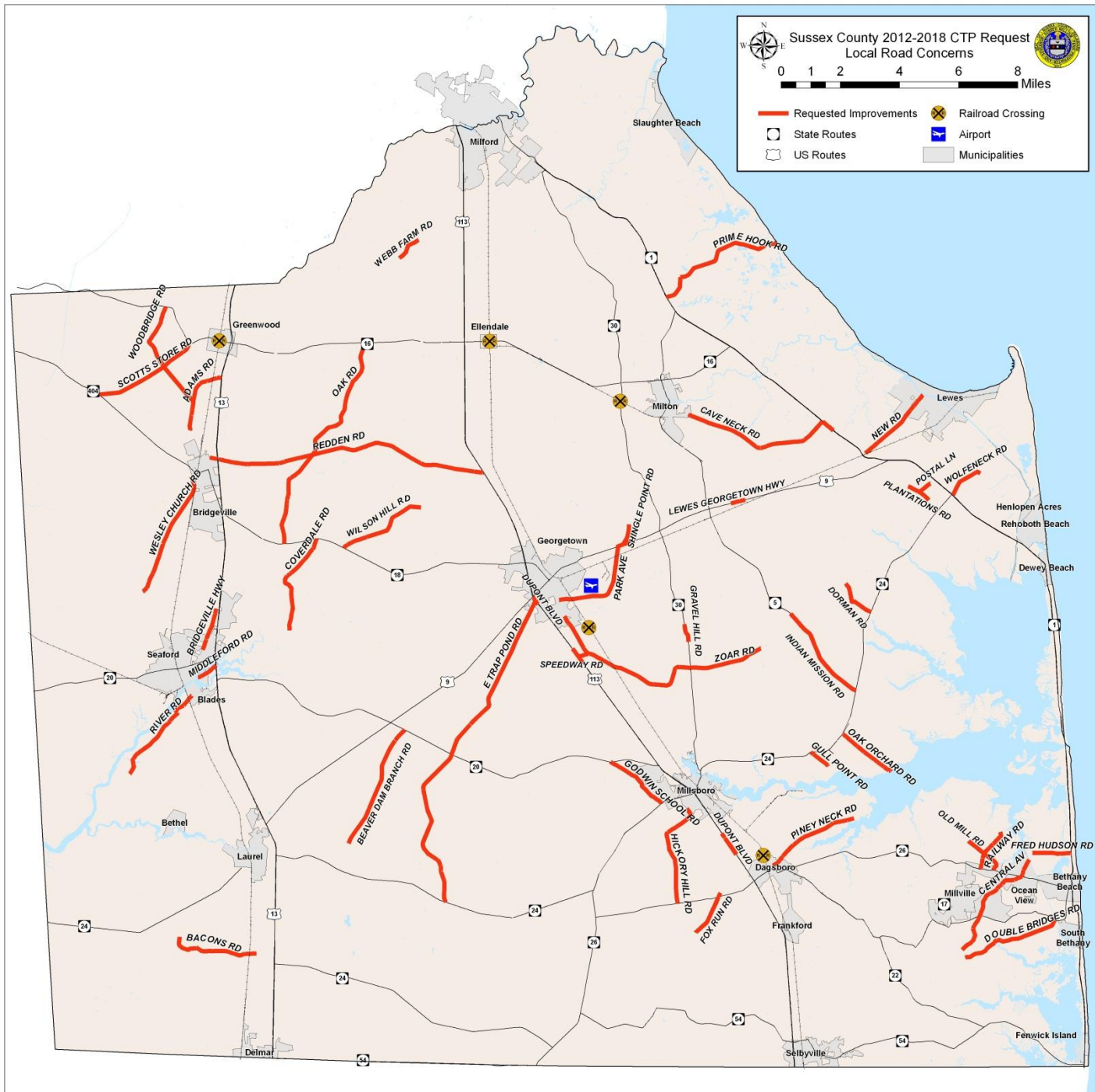
- RD 38 – Prime Hook Road
(Flooding; Pave & Widen)
- RD 88 – Cave Neck Road
(Widen shoulders)

Seaford

- RD 535 – Middleford Road
(Gateway improvements)
- US 13A – Bridgeville Highway
(Sidewalk connectivity)

2012-2018 Capital Transportation Program Request

Items highlighted in **RED** correspond with road improvement requests listed on Pages 14 and 15 of the Sussex County 2012-2018 Capital Transportation Program request.



Intersections, Signage & Signalization

2012-2018 Capital Transportation Program Request

Like a chain, a transportation network is only as strong as the intersections, signage and traffic signals that connect together the system of roads and highways. Routes that easily clog because of limited capacity, poorly timed signals and inadequate signage can impede the flow of traffic.



The County encourages the State to continue evaluating intersections along major routes, such as the US 9 corridor between Georgetown and Lewes, to determine the best means for improving traffic flow. The County supports the State's current effort to improve US 9 intersections at Gravel Hill, Hudson and Sweetbriar roads. Improvements at these and other intersections could include the installation of dedicated turn lanes and better coordination of traffic signals.

The County also encourages the State to improve signage along and near roads, such as SR 30 and SR 5 from Milford to Long Neck, that could serve as local bypass routes, thereby alleviating congestion on major highway corridors, including SR 1 and US 113.

An additional suggestion to improving mobility is to incorporate blinking red arrow, left-turn signals at key intersections. This type of signal, found in areas of Kent and New Castle counties, could ease congestion at Sussex intersections, such as those along SR 1, US 9, US 13 and US 113.



Transportation Alternatives

2012-2018 Capital Transportation Program Request

As high energy costs and economic uncertainty continue to weigh on household budgets, Delaware has the opportunity now to expand its transportation alternatives – particularly mass transit – to meet public demand, conserve resources and lessen the burden on highways. Stronger consideration toward various options, such as those listed below, could reduce traffic congestion on Sussex County's network of roads.

➤ **Bus Service**

- *Fixed Route Service*

Extending DART First State service to other areas, such as Selbyville, Millsboro, Long Neck and other job centers (based on requests)

- *Private Partnerships*

Encourage private mass transit providers to offer bus routes between urban centers and Sussex beaches

- *Signage and Stops*

Current bus stops should be evaluated to ensure pick-up and drop-off locations are optimal; larger signs at those locations could better draw public attention and boost ridership

- *Coordinated ParaTransit Services*

Helps the growing senior and disabled population with more efficient service

➤ **Passenger Rail Service**

The County supports the ongoing effort by Delaware and Maryland to study the concept of passenger rail service on the Delmarva Peninsula

➤ **Expanded Park & Ride System**

Offer public additional park & ride locations to encourage carpooling, improve use of mass transit

➤ **Bicycle and Pedestrian**

Complement the popular Junction and Breakwater Trail with other rail trails (e.g. Georgetown to Lewes, as well as Ellendale to Milton); such interconnectivity of trails could allow cyclists to commute safely between coastal and inland portions of the county (see Bicycling/Walking Trails slide on Page 9).



Closing Remarks

2012-2018 Capital Transportation Program Request

Sussex County Council thanks the Department of Transportation and the Council on Transportation for considering its request for the 2012-2018 Capital Transportation Program.

As limited transportation funding is appropriated for various projects throughout the State of Delaware, particularly in these difficult economic times, the County Council trusts that DelDOT and the Council on Transportation recognize how vital the County's recommendations are to accommodating an increasing population, expansive geography and local economy.

Sussex County encompasses the largest geographic area in Delaware, occupying more than 46 percent of the area in the state. Additionally, nearly 37 percent of all State-maintained roads are in Sussex.

The Delaware Population Consortium estimates Sussex County's population will grow approximately 30 percent between 2010 and 2025. Despite a weaker national economy, tourism continues to thrive in Southern Delaware, and that causes additional demands on our transportation system.

Residents of Sussex County continue to express concerns regarding the maintenance and improvements needed to the local road system. As the county grows, these concerns will only increase. Waiting to plan and make needed roadway improvements after the fact will only make these improvements more expensive and difficult to implement.

Sussex County requests the State of Delaware weigh these factors as it allocates transportation funds. The State should also consider the economic impact as it relates to the County's request.

Closing Remarks

2012-2018 Capital Transportation Program Request

As noted in previous years, County Council encourages the State to consider adequate funding for needed improvements to the County's transportation system. Sussex County urges DelDOT to take the necessary steps now to make essential projects, particularly improvements to the network of east-west arteries, among its highest priorities.

In addition to improving mobility and safety, enhancing economic development opportunities in Sussex County should be a factor in determining transportation priorities and funding.

Rerouting Park Avenue and extending the main runway at the Sussex County Airport may preserve existing jobs at the County's Industrial Park, and spawn new employment opportunities in the near future. Meantime, providing a walking/bicycling trail between Georgetown and Lewes would increase tourism opportunities, especially in central Sussex County.

Overall improvements to the County's transportation system will ensure Sussex County and the State of Delaware can continue to serve our population, as well as attract and accommodate the millions of visitors who come to our state each year.

Again, Sussex County Council thanks the Department of Transportation and the Council on Transportation for allowing the County the opportunity to submit its yearly requests for the Capital Transportation Program. We expect this report will assist the Department in prioritizing which projects earn funding from DelDOT's limited resources.



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